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Identical letters dated 13 July 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to draw your attention to the position of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2016/572) for the period from 26 February to 24 June 2016.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates its firm commitment to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Lebanon.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic also reiterates the position set forth in numerous letters addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council regarding implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). It is surprised that the Secretariat persists in mentioning the Syrian Arab Republic in its reports on the implementation of that resolution, which was adopted as a result of Israel's military aggression against Lebanon in 2006. Accordingly, reports of the Secretariat should conform to the mandate set out in the resolution, instead of deviating from its primary objective.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic rejects Israel's baseless claims concerning the transfer of weapons to Lebanon. Those claims are a desperate attempt to distract attention from the real threat, namely Israel's own aggressive policies, which endanger stability in the region as a whole. It is surprising that the Secretariat persists in including such malicious allegations in its reports, although it acknowledges that it is not in a position to verify them.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that the delineation of the border between Syria and Lebanon is an issue of bilateral sovereignty that should be decided by those States when the conditions on the ground permit. The delineation of borders in the Shab'a Farms area should take place after the Israeli occupation of that area has come to an end in accordance with the authoritative international resolutions.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic affirms that the Syrian Arab Army has continued to defend all Syrian territory and respond to armed terrorist groups, which are supported and funded by States and actors that are now well known. It is surprising that the Secretariat is overlooking the fact that Lebanese political movements are openly seeking to destabilize Syria by sponsoring, protecting and supporting the *takfirist* terrorist groups that are active in many parts of Lebanon. Those movements are also providing the terrorists with political and

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logistical support, and that has enabled them to turn those areas into a rear base for terrorist groups that are active in numerous areas next to the Lebanese border.

The Syrian Arab Republic stresses that it is important for the reports of the Secretariat to avoid double standards with regard to counter-terrorism and the threat that terrorism represents to Syria. Events in Lebanon, Iraq and other countries have proven that terrorism is not confined to a particular State, but that the threat extends to the countries of the entire region and beyond.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic remains committed to cooperating with Lebanon in order to ensure respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the two kindred countries, and thereby foster the security and stability of both countries and prevent the use of either country's territory to undermine the national security and stability of the other.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative